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CIRCULATION.

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CONCERNING GEOLOGICAL REPORTS.

A preliminary report on Gowganda Mining Division has been issued by the Geological Survey of Canada. It embodies the results of Mr. W. H. Collins' work during the field season of 1908.

Mr. Collins sketches carefully the general geology of the district. The typical rocks of each formation are discussed. Diabase and aplite come in for a full share of attention. An abstract of some of these pages will be found elsewhere in this issue of the Canadian Mining Journal. We wish to develop a few thoughts inspired by Mr. Collins' remarks on the economic geology of the region.

The field geologist of to-day is expected to keep ever before him the economic side of his work. It is not intended that he should usurp the functions of the prospector or of the mining engineer. Nor can he. Usually in Canada his field is so large and so new that his first few seasons must be devoted to topographic observations, rather than to pure geology.

After determining the topographic features the geologist begins to distinguish, differentiate, and correlate the formations into which the rocks of the region are resolvable.

When the geologist precedes the prospector he is too much absorbed in his duties to permit himself the relaxation of prospecting. When he follows the prospector he must regard the richest silver veins as decidedly of less value to him than a good rock exposure. Veins and other vanities must wait until the broad geological history of his territory has been ascertained. This, at least, was the attitude of the last generation of geologists. We do not mean to imply that commercial phases were totally overlooked. But the purely academic predominated.

Whilst it is apparent that the old order is changing, the readjustment is slow. Habits of thought are persistent. The geological reports of yesterday were strongly academic. To-day they are only less so. Yet the tendency to investigate and emphasize more and more the commercial potentialities of our country has been plainly evident in the operations of the Canadian Survey during the last few years. This does not mean that pure geology is being neglected. There is little danger of that. It does mean that the younger generation of geologists is being trained to correlate geological data and commercial possibilities, that a closer bond is being formed between the Survey and the mining industry.

The effort to develop the economic geology of fields old and new has brought with it complications. Canada is lustily prosperous. It is passing through a period of easy money. Mining enterprise, some of